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That the separateness of yeomanry and elite had visible and sociologically important expression in physical type in Haiti was a clear consequence of the history of that country. But the traditional preponderant light skins at the top of the structure and the preponderant darkness at its base are less important than the domination of the total structure, and of the institutional means for changing it, by a mere fraction of the national population. It is the *power* of the elite which has mattered through time; its physical appearance has been only a historically derived expression of that power. Such a balance of politically weak masses against numerically sparse power holders is common, perhaps particularly in the "less developed world"; but each such case has certain special characteristics. Haiti's special nature is not simply in its being a yeoman country, and one in which a small group dominates the mass. As a rural, agrarian, unindustrialized, politically sovereign, and quasi-capitalistic country, Haiti shares much with other lands; but in each regard its own particularity needs to be sensed.

The rurality of Haiti is extreme, not simply because there are no concentrations of population in excess of 25,000 except for Port-au-Prince and Cap Haïtien but also because towns of intermediate size are few in number, and the urban concentrations in the country's two cities are substantially of relatively recent rural origin. Port-au-Prince dominates the Republic in all of its economic, political, and social activities. Furthermore, the rural towns have been losing to the capital, not gaining from it. Until the United States occupation, the larger towns of the coast, such as Jérémie, Jacmel, and St. Marc, were united economically with each other, and to some extent with the capital, by a lively coastwise shipping system, and the inland towns were tributary to those of the coast. The growth of inland transport during the occupation strengthened the interior towns while coastwise shipping declined, but the capital grew even more important as the sole economic center of the Republic. Since the 1940s, the rapid deterioration of the road system has left both inland and coastal towns enfeebled; only Port-au-Prince has remained strong.

The dominion of Port-au-Prince is firm, and there is no focus of power in the countryside that can counteract it. Those few foreign enterprises in Haiti that base themselves outside the capital city use local port facilities (e.g. Mirogoâne for Reynolds Aluminum, Cap Haïtien for the sisal plantations of the north) and do not affect the development of the interior transport.

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[1804-1843]

A cultivator who loafs on his assigned job shall spend twenty-four hours in jail for his first offense and lose his wages; for a second offense he must work on public projects. Field labor shall be regularly carried on from Monday morning until Friday evening, except for legal holidays; work begins at dawn, continues except for a half-hour at breakfast until noon, stops then for two hours, and is once more resumed until sunset. Pregnant females are to be assigned to light work only, and after the fourth month of pregnancy need do no field work. Four months after delivery, a mother is to return to field work, but with three hours a day less than before, until she has weaned her child. Disobedience and insult to overseers are punishable by imprisonment. Since Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays are free, there is to be no dancing or any other festivity by night or day from Monday through Friday.

On each estate is to be a hierarchy of directors, all of whom the workers shall obey. In ascending order, these men are drivers (or squad foremen),[a] jobbers, sublessees, lessees, proprietors and managers, overseers of districts, and police.

In establishing a system of remuneration Boyer kept the accustomed method of allotting a proportion of the marketed crop to the workers in lieu of hourly or daily wages. In any season from a quarter to a half of the gross receipts of the estates was to go to the laborers, the exact proportion in any year to be determined by the government. It was assumed by Boyer and Inginac that there would be an added inducement to work if the laborers' share were distributed not equally, but rather in proportion to the merit and worth of the individual, these evaluations to be made by the recommendation of overseers.

Enforcement of the Code was placed in the hands of local justices and the army. Soldiers were to be assigned to each plantation, receiving their living from it, in return preserving order and routine. Although the whip was once more prohibited, steady labor might still be enforced by other means; the law definitely stated that soldiers were to discipline the lazy, the lawless, and the vagrant. Local justices were to deal with any civil difficulties arising in the execution

a. The word "driver" was commonly used in West Indian slave colonies with no other meaning than that attached to the word when one speaks of a man "driving" his horses. It is not necessary to beat a horse to make it go properly; a word of direction may suffice.

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family on an average, at 5 persons, husband, wife, and three children, we arrive at the conclusion, that the head of every third family in the state is engaged in cultivating his own freehold; a proportion of independent proprietors, such as perhaps scarcely any other country in the world can exhibit. The number of acres cultivated by these small proprietors, varies from 9 to 30; many of them keep horses, cows, and goats: they raise sufficient provisions of the bread kind, such as yams, plantains, and bananas, for the main support of their families; they kill hogs for meat, and they dispose of their coffee, cotton, hemp, castor oil, and fruit, at the public market for money, to purchase clothing, furniture, and other necessaries. The houses they live in, though poorly furnished, are decent habitations; and many of them have gardens attached, neatly fenced in with bamboo, or with logwood, or aloe hedges.[33]

If these figures are even approximately accurate, the majority of the people of Haiti had not yet become peasants in the sense of being landowners, for in the statement cited only a third of the people owned their land. Another large group, however, possibly a third of the population, were squatters, living on land which technically belonged to someone else but from which they were never ejected. The remaining third, excluding the town and village dwellers, were in the intermediate stage between hirelings and peasants. Some worked for a given rate of wages, but the larger number worked for shares of the produce on the land of large proprietors.

The crop-sharing system (Americans of the twentieth century call it share-cropping) of the 'thirties and 'forties was an automatic but temporary adjustment worked out in perfect disregard of the Code Rural. In general, two arrangements prevailed. By one the laborers worked in return for half the total produce of the estate, raising food for themselves in gardens provided by the owner; under the other they worked for a quarter of the produce, the proprietor guaranteeing to keep them in provisions. There was no general concurrence in Haiti at the time as to which plan was the more economical to the laborer and his family. Certainly both schemes were prejudicial to large crops of coffee and sugar, and therefore to the economic prosperity of the proprietors and the state; since this was so, the crop-sharing expedient was short-lived. Workers participating in it lived in the huts and cabins which, under the old régime, had been inhabited by their slave ancestors. As these fell to pieces others, cheaper and less soundly built, were constructed to take their place.

The crop-sharing system, economically debilitating though it was,

33. Ibid.

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The crop-sharing system, economically debilitating though it was,

had one great advantage to the laborer: he felt himself free and independent, with the right to engage himself to any man or to refrain from working altogether. No longer was he bound to the soil of one plantation, forced to labor under a "driver," forbidden to dance or to sleep when the mood seized him. This new freedom imparted to him a self-consequence which made him, in his own estimation, almost as important as a freeholder. The master could not say to his men, "Go into such a field and dig cane holes. The clouds are gathering and we must get in the young plants"; or, "Weed such a field," or "Prune the coffee trees today." Neither could he send a band of young people at his discretion to pick the coffee berries as they ripened, or to cull the bad berries, when pulped and dried, from the good. Every man was, so to speak, master of his own house and his own hours, considering himself at liberty to work with his family at almost any time and in any manner he pleased.

Herein lay the fatal defect of the crop-sharing system. There was no way of coming to an agreement among the laborers on an estate as to the amount of labor to be performed by each. One man was weaker than another; one more disposed to drink or to loaf than another. The whole group of, say, twenty families was to share in common the half or the quarter of the gross produce; but who should measure the exact proportion which would fall in justice to each family?

These annual disagreements led to a compromise which ultimately broke down even the moderate-sized estates. The proprietor, in order to avoid disputes, divided his fields among his laborers, allowing one family five acres, another ten, a third twenty, according to the nature of the land and the sort of produce which could be raised upon it. True, the proprietor lost by this division all the benefits of concentrating labor in a particular field at a particular season; also, if he wished to have necessary work done in haste which required a large number of laborers, he had to bribe them (generally by a drink of rum or tafia). Obviously, when such difficulties stood in the way of necessary repairs and improvements, the proprietors simply preferred to allow their estates to deteriorate. Like the workers, they acquired an attitude of not worrying about the future; unlike the frame of mind of the workers, their attitude came from resigned acceptance of the inevitable, not from preoccupation with the present.

Certain astute proprietors tried to get as many families together as could act in concert without jarring or jealousy, and to induce them,

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by persuasion, to do as much work as possible for his and their own interests. In a few cases the success of such efforts was tolerably good; but one worker disposed to be sullen or idle, or even not physically strong, might throw the whole scheme into disorder. One's own profits would be cut by the misdeeds of others even when one had himself been industrious. This caused a decline of incentive, sometimes among a whole group of potentially good workers, because one or two of the number shirked. Probably the most patent evil of such arrangements was that every laborer realized that he did not suffer as directly for idleness or neglect as when working for himself; his fellow workers shared the consequences of his misconduct in some degree, and his employer in a still greater measure. The driving force of individual responsibility was removed.

Boyer and Inginac, foreseeing just such disorder, had tried to provide against it in the Code Rural by giving summary powers to local judges to inflict penalties upon lazy or malingering workers. Quite aside, however, from the loss of time and the inconvenience to both parties in going constantly to a judge for his decision, the proprietor was afraid to act on this principle to any extent, since if he did so he might lose his laborers altogether.

It was a rare proprietor, then, who could hope to make much of a fortune out of his plantation. More and more the landowners, having subdivided their fields, grew lax in overseeing them. The workers, freed from constant supervision, accustomed by long habit to living in one hut, and unconsciously developing a mentality which made them feel, as did American squatters on frontier lands, that they had a right to the land they tilled, imperceptibly developed into peasants. The state's remaining properties, no longer under cultivation, were invaded by families of small farmers, and the government took no steps to oust them or send them back to privately owned plantations. The estates of individual aristocrats underwent the same fate if not carefully watched. Theoretically, it was the duty of the army to drive out squatters, to force laborers back into "proper" agricultural work; but the army consisted of peasant youths who would not turn against people of their own group.

Legal irregularity was gradually sanctioned by the passage of time, usage being a stronger guarantor of rights than unenforced laws on the statute books.

Haitian peasantry, to sum up, began as the unplanned, undesired